

If anyone can set up a website and publish news and reviews, is the traditional games press doomed?

Description

The internet is saturated with sites and blogs that publish games news and reviews at a phenomenal rate. Within seconds of press releases being sent out, they appear on the internet in a dozen different ways. Technologies like Twitter and Facebook allow us to release snippets of information without even needing to write a full article. Games reviews get published on the internet days, weeks or sometimes months before the traditional printed press have a chance to release theirs. I spoke to one very unhappy staff writer recently, who was complaining that he needed to have reviews written for a magazine that was to be published in 2 months time. He could not convince his editor that it would be pointless releasing reviews of games 2 whole months after everybody else. At any given second of the day there is more information being uploaded than anyone could feasibly read.

So what does this mean for games magazines and the like? If they cannot keep up with the speed at which the internet can get information out, what place do they have in our world?

Let's first look at the type of information that is released on the internet. For the most part it is made up of amateurs, like me. As with everything on the internet the quality and accuracy of what is published varies wildly. Some of the amateur stuff can be of an extremely high quality, often rivalling that of the professional sites. However, just as much if not more, tends to be low quality, rushed and often filled with nothing more than personal rants (again, I hold my hands up as guilty on that front from time to time!). This being the case, people often do not trust the information they can get from the internet. +1 for the magazines.

The professional sites, which are often linked to the same publishers as the magazines, and well run amateur ones still have to be taken into account though; they get good quality information out into the world much sooner than the magazines can. They are well trusted and in many cases can get exclusives that magazines cannot. +1 for the web!

So again we ask, can the magazines survive? What do they have that the internet does not?

For me personally it comes down to preference. Sometimes I like to hold a magazine and read it on the train, or in the bath or wherever. I like the fact that you know the people working at the magazine do it for a living. It is not just a hobby, so you can expect a certain degree of quality. At times they are also able to get certain exclusive previews well in advance of even the biggest games web sites. On the flip side, it is nice to pop online at lunch to get the latest news and reviews available, or to check out twitter for current opinions on a game. It is also very handy to be able to quickly look up a review on my phone when I am in a store about to buy a game!

There may not be a place in this new age world for all traditional press. The internet is going to take a large chunk of that business. This can be seen already, with many magazines running websites to supplement their printed content. Some magazines have even taken the option of ditching the printed versions of their publication and take it fully online. News papers often have sections of their websites

dedicated to games that are never even mentioned in their printed counterparts.

All of these facts aside, I feel that traditional printed press is far from dead or even doomed, as long as there are people like me, who sometimes just want to hold a magazine rather than stare at a monitor and who know that quantity of information is no substitute for quality of content.

Category

1. Rants
2. Technology

Date Created

22/11/2010

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